REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

No claims are currently being canceled or added.

Claim 23 is currently being amended, whereby the amendment made to claim 23 is minor in nature and does not materially affect the scope of that claim.

Claims 1-24 are pending for further consideration on the merits.

Applicants appreciate the indication in the Office Action that claims 17-22 are allowed, as well as the indication in the Office Action that claim 9 contains allowable subject matter.

On page 1 of the Office Action, the drawings were objected to because of a misspelling in Figure 12. By way of this amendment and reply, the misspelling in Figure 12 has been corrected.

A new Abstract has been provided (along with a marked-up version showing changes made) to fit the 150-word requirement, as well as to remove "means" language from the Abstract.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,955,061 to Doi et al.; and claims 3, 4, 8, 11, 12 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Doi et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0024525 to Hata et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the reasons given below.

Doi et al. discloses that a correlation is performed between a preceding line and an encoding line of a single image. This is acknowledged on page 2, lines 2 and 6-8 of the Office Action. That is, Doi et al. simply relates to a standard method of encoding and decoding a single image.

In contrast, according to the present invention as recited in claim 1, the image processing apparatus correlates information among image data that

includes a reference image data (e.g. first image data) extracted from a plurality of input image data. The plurality of image data is of successive original images of the same format. <u>That is, unlike Doi et al., the present invention does not make a correlation between the lines of a single image data.</u> Rather, in the present invention according to claim 1, correlation information is among a plurality of image data that includes the reference image data (e.g. first image data) extracted from the plurality of image data. In other words, the present invention according to claim 1 does not perform image correlation between portions of a single image as in Doi et al., but rather it performs correlation between separate images that correspond to plural image data. The present invention is directed to efficiently compressing plural still image data by correlating between the plural data. See also the background on pages 1 and 2 of the present specification in this regard.

Independent method claim 23 recites features similar to those discussed above with respect to independent apparatus claim 1, and method claim 24 also recites features similar to those discussed above (with respect to a decoding portion of image processing).

Since Hata et al. does not rectify the above-mentioned shortcomings of Doi et al., all of the presently pending claims are patentable over the cited art of record.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing,

the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

Phillip J. Articola
Pavan K. Agarwal
Registration No. 40,888

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5143
Telephone: (202) 672-5489
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Phillip J. Articola
Registration No. 38,819

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

~~In a case where a plurality of image data read by a scanner section are a plurality of successive still images of original images of the same format, when~~ When a ~~the~~ plurality of image data are to be compressed, an image correlation information extraction ~~means~~ unit extracts respective image correlation information of image data, using first image data ~~of the plural image data~~ as reference image data. ~~Encoding~~ An encoding ~~means~~ unit compresses the extracted image correlation information to produce ~~image correlation information~~ encoded data. ~~Data~~ A data output ~~means~~ unit outputs the compressed ~~image correlation information encoded~~ data and the reference image data to a page memory. When the compressed ~~plural image~~ data are to be restored, a data input ~~means~~ unit supplies the image correlation ~~information encoded~~ data input from the page memory to an image correlation information decoding ~~means~~ unit, and supplies the reference image data to an image restoring ~~means~~ unit. The image correlation information decoding ~~means~~ unit decodes the image correlation ~~information encoded~~ data into the respective image correlation information and supplies the image correlation information to the image restoring ~~means~~ unit. The image restoring ~~means~~ unit restores the plural image data from the respective image correlation information and the reference image data.